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MEMORANDUM

April 14, 1980

TO : Ambassador Castro

THRU : DCM - Maxwell Chaplin
POLCOUNS - William H. Hallman

FROM : POL - Townsend B. Friedman

SUBJECT: Human Rights Records - General Vaquero and Admiral Lambruschini

REF : Mr. Chaplin's Memo of April 9, 1980

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
Release () Excise () Deny
Exemption(s):
Declassify: () In Part () In Full
() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to
Date Declassify on Reason

General Vaquero

General Vaquero's human rights record appears relatively clean. Following the coup in March 1976 he was Deputy Commander of the III Corps. His responsibilities as such were largely administrative and confined to the internal operation of the Corps. He did not have effective operational responsibilities. He was undoubtedly aware of what was going on at the time, but the man who was running things was the then III Corps Commander Menendez. Vaquero moved to V Corps in early 1977. The scale of the "dirty war" in the south was much reduced. Moreover, Vaquero's Corps was the first to return to conventional military training, deemphasizing counter-insurgency operations.

On assuming Command of the III Corps in the fall of 1979 following the Menendez mini-coup, Vaquero gave every indication of wanting to move the nation back to the rule of law. To the Ambassador, who visited him soon thereafter, he stoutly defended the GOA's decision to release Timerman. Moreover, he said that at that moment he was reviewing the case of Jaime Lokman, then still languishing in jail. Vaquero asserted that, if he was convinced that Lokman was unjustly being held, he would recommend his release to General Viola, and this in fact is what happened.

There are no flag officers in the Argentine military who were unaware of the way the "dirty war" was being fought, even Vaquero. He does not seem to have had a major role in ordering the Army's war and when given a command of his own, acted with

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dispatch to end the worst aspects of the "war" in his area. Finally, and importantly, he has supported the position of Viola and Videla, who are seeking to move Argentina back to the rule of law.

Admiral Lambruschini

Lambruschini was Navy Chief of Staff from 1974-1979, prior to moving up to CINC in 1978. The Navy's record of human rights abuses is no better than any of the other services--and the activities at the Navy Mechanics School are well known. Lambruschini was in a responsible command position throughout the "dirty war" and was aware of what was taking place. He undoubtedly participated in the decisions on how the war would be fought.

Since assuming the CINC position and becoming a member of the Junta, Lambruschini, whose daughter was killed by a Montonero bomb placed in the family home, has been a supporter of the government's policy of taking the country back towards the rule of law and democracy.

CLEARANCES:

POL/R:JDiStefano *JD*

DAO:Capt.PBarrish (out of town)

Col.AMacdonald (out of town)

Col.RPitt *RuP*

POL:TBFriedman:sb *TBF*

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